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SUBJECT: SOUTHEAST TURKEY PRESS SUMMARY FOR MARCH 8, 2005

This is the Southeastern Turkey press summary for March 8, 2005.

Please note that Turkish press reports often contain errors or exaggerations; AmConsulate Adana does not vouch for the accuracy of the reports summarized here.

POLITICAL, SECURITY, HUMAN RIGHTS

HURRIYET (CUKUROVA): A dog with rabies bit an 11-year-old in the Islahiye district of Gaziantep province, and the incident has caused panic. Children are afraid to go to school, and a local neighbor is accompanying them to school with a shotgun. Several villages have reportedly been placed under "quarantine."

OZGUR GUNDEM: A Human Rights Watch (HRW) report stated that Turkey failed to live up to plans to facilitate the return of internally displaced people, mainly Kurds, to southeastern Turkey. According to HRW, Turkey misled the EU about its progress in facilitating the return.

CUMHURİYET / OZGUR GUNDEM: The Human Rights Association started a probe into claims that a grave holding five bodies exists in a Jandarma station yard in Yedisu district of Bingol. Mustafa Bayram, who did his military service in that Jandarma station in 2000, claims that five PKK members were caught during an operation in April 2000, and were later (allegedly) interrogated, killed and buried in the yard of the station.

CUMHURİYET: Mehtap Kizilkan, a social worker for the Diyarbakir NGO KA-MER (Women Association), drew attention to the myriad types of violence women face. She announced that forty-two women, "escaping the threat of death," applied to KA-MER for help in one year. In Van, 82 women have applied to the newly opened Counseling Office of the Women's Association, 60 of whom solicited help for being exposed to violence.

BOLGE: Despite campaigns to raise awareness on the issue of education and children's rights, children in southeastern Turkey are working in a variety of sectors instead of going to the schools. According to surveys, 87,000 children between the ages 12-14 are (reportedly) working, primarily in agricultural fields.

YENI SAFAK: The Turkish Parliament's Human Rights Commission reportedly obtained a statement which Major General Yavuz Erturk gave to the European Court of Human Rights in May, 1998, regarding the disappearance of 11 villagers in the Kulp district of Diyarbakir in 1993. In the statement, Gen. Erturk stated that the Bolu Command Brigade was not conducting an operation in Kepir hamlet of Kulp on the date when the incident was supposed to have taken place.

REID